

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Sarah Roy <sdisanoroy@gmail.com>

Date: March 6, 2022 at 8:03:50 PM EST

To: ENVtestimony@cta.ct.gov

Cc: bikewalkct@bikewalkct.org, "Rep. McCarthy Vahey, Cristin" <Cristin.McCarthyVahey@cga.ct.gov>, Tony Hwang <tony.hwang@cga.ct.gov>

Subject: Testimony in support of HB 5291

To the Members of the Environment Committee,

I am writing to you to express my support for HB 5291, an act to provide increased funds for greenways and bike and recreational trails.

Funding for separated, protected bike infrastructure is one of Connecticut's highest statewide needs. In the last round of state funding, only \$3 million could be awarded out of 63 applications totaling \$21.8 million. This indicates that there is a vast, pent-up and unmet demand for this funding. This program is specifically used for feasibility and design to get small and medium-sized, vital projects to the funding stage. Robust funding of this program is essential for continuing to build out our state trail network.

Here in Fairfield, our town is sorely lacking in separate, protected bicycle infrastructure, and the absence of this infrastructure negatively impacts our quality of life. At present, there are virtually no safe, designated bike trails for recreation, commuting, or exploration. This shortage of bike infrastructure became even more apparent during the Covid-19 pandemic, when there was a sharp increase in active transportation throughout town. Families and individuals looking for safe ways to get fresh air and exercise were forced to either take their chances riding in the road with fast-moving motorized vehicles or, if available, attempt to ride on the sidewalk and dodge people walking there. I personally know of multiple families in my neighborhood who do not allow their older children to ride bikes in their own neighborhoods because they don't believe it's safe and there are no other local alternatives for them to use.

Active transportation and recreation has long been understood to improve health outcomes for humans, as well as decreasing carbon emissions. If we truly want people to make these healthier choices for our bodies and the planet, we must create the conditions that encourage and incentivize them to choose them.

I am urging you to support HB 5291 so that our state and communities like Fairfield can build out our state trail networks and provide our residents with diverse non-motorized transportation and recreation opportunities.

Thank you,

Sarah Roy

Chair, Town of Fairfield Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee
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